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Change of month – change of weather

30 January 2008

After several weeks of mild weather over many parts of the UK, forecasters at the Met Office are predicting a short cold snap at the end of the week.

Before the colder weather arrives, severe gales will bring heavy rain to all parts later on Wednesday and into Thursday, with Arctic air sweeping south to all parts of the country on Friday. Met Office Chief Forecaster, Bob Wilderspin, said: "Gusts of wind of up to 70 m.p.h. could lead to local travel disruption before colder conditions arrive."

Snow is expected in many northern and western areas on Friday, especially Northern Ireland, Scotland, north-west England, and north Wales where up to 10 cm of snow is possible. Blizzard conditions will occur over northern Scotland. Wintry conditions may also spread to other areas for a time.

The prospect of colder weather will come as a shock to the system, after what has so far been, another very mild month for many areas.

The predicted colder weather means that the Met Office has activated its 'Healthy Outlook' alert system. Patrick Sachon, Health Forecasting Manager at the Met Office said: "Working with partners, the Met Office will be contacting over 6000 COPD patients across the UK, to warn them about the weather conditions and remind them what to do to stay well."

Temperatures will revert to near-normal at the start of the new week as rain returns from the west.

The public are encouraged to keep up to date with the very latest Met Office forecasts through its website on TV and over the radio.

Latest forecast for the UK

UK warnings of severe weather

What to do in severe weather

Transport and flooding links

Healthy Outlook COPD forecast alert service

Notes:

Provisional UK mean temperatures up to 27 January have been 5.3 °C, well above the long term average of 3.4 °C. However, this is not as mild as January 2007 when the mean temperature was 6.0 °C.

Patients with COPD – Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease receive the 'Healthy Outlook' service from participating NHS Primary Care Trusts.

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